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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**CENTER OF GRAVITY IN THE ASYMMETRIC
ENVIRONMENT: APPLICABLE OR NOT?**

by

Rodney D. Kelly

June 2006

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

Richard Grahlman
Timothy Doorey

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**CENTER OF GRAVITY IN THE ASYMMETRIC ENVIRONMENT:
APPLICABLE OR NOT?**

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Lieutenant, United States Navy
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT

The military concept of a Center of Gravity (COG) in conflicts, introduced by Carl von Clausewitz in the 1820s, is now an element of numerous military doctrines that planners draw on in designing strategies for winning wars. Over the last twenty-five years, the concept has become increasingly central to U.S. warfare doctrine. The world has changed a great deal since the introduction of COG. And in today's asymmetric environment, in which non-state actors use unconventional tactics, it is becoming extremely difficult to apply the COG concept. The primary reason for this difficulty is that non-state actors do not operate as a unitary body, which makes it difficult to target a COG that would lead to a decisive victory. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze both conflicts in which state-sanctioned militaries' applied the COG concept and conflicts in which non-state actors used asymmetric tactics. The thesis attempts to determine the applicability of COG in an asymmetric environment. If the Center of Gravity concept is determined inapplicable, then the U.S. military must either redefine it or create a new means to deal with this new type of warfare.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
A.	BACKGROUND	1
B.	DEFINITION OF THE MILITARY CONCEPT “CENTER OF GRAVITY”	2
C.	OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS.....	4
D.	PRIMARY THESIS ARGUMENT	6
II.	THE FRENCH FOURTH REPUBLIC VERSUS THE ALGERIAN NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT	9
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	9
B.	FORMATION OF THE ALGERIAN NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT.....	10
C.	THE MONTHS LEADING UP TO THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS	13
1.	The First Bombings by the FLN.....	14
2.	The Assassination of Mayor Froger	15
D.	THE FRENCH MILITARY RESPONSE	16
1.	Massu’s First Clash with the FLN.....	16
2.	The Second Wave of Bombings by Yacef	17
3.	The Net Closes.....	17
4.	Alleg Speaks Out.....	18
5.	Pierre Leulliette Speaks Out.....	19
6.	L’Affaire Audin Disappears.....	19
7.	Bollardiere and Teitgen Protest.....	19
E.	CONCLUSION	20
III.	ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIAN INTIFADAS	23
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	23
B.	ISRAELI MILITARY SUCCESSES AGAINST STATE SPONSORED FORCES, AND THE BEGINNING OF DIFFICULTIES AGAINST UNCONVENTIONAL FORCES.....	24
1.	The 1967 Six Day War.....	24
2.	The 1973 Arab–Israeli War	25
3.	Israel in Lebanon	25
C.	THE FIRST INTIFADA.....	26
D.	ISRAEL’S RESPONSE TO THE FIRST INTIFADA	29
1.	Shootings.....	30
2.	Beatings.....	30
3.	Teargassing.....	30
4.	Mass Arrests.....	31
5.	Deportation.....	31
6.	School and University Closures	31
E.	OUTCOMES	32
F.	THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND INTIFADAS...33	

1.	The Permit System.....	34
2.	Detention and Torture.....	34
3.	Land Confiscation.....	35
4.	House Demolition.....	35
5.	Environmental and Economic Exploitation	36
G.	THE SECOND INTIFADA AND THE ISRAELI RESPONSE	36
H.	CONCLUSION	38
IV.	THE UNITED STATES VERSUS RADICAL ISLAMIST TERRORISTS	41
A.	INTRODUCTION.....	41
B.	BACKGROUND	42
1.	The Iranian Revolution 1979	43
2.	Iraq–Iran War.....	46
3.	The United States Strengthens its Military Cooperation with Israel.....	47
4.	The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan.....	47
5.	The First Gulf War	48
C.	AL QAEDA JIHAD	49
1.	The September 11th Terrorist Attacks	51
D.	GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM.....	52
1.	Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)	52
2.	Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)	53
E.	CONCLUSION	54
V.	CONCLUSION	57
A.	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	57
B.	FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR THE U.S. MILITARY	58
C.	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	59
	LIST OF REFERENCES	61
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST	65

I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Imagine fighting a war today without a careful plan, preparations, or concise instructions about how the various armed forces will achieve their objectives. While imagining that, also consider the significant role that technology now plays in extending the boundaries of the battlefield. A war without proper planning, coupled with an expansive battlefield, would have significant consequences, including an astronomical cost and an unacceptable loss of human lives. Such a war would be nothing more than the execution of a number of separate tactical actions that may or may not lead ultimately to operational success. It is that possibility that prompted military schools and institutions to initiate the instruction of officers in the art of planning and preparation for war. They began teaching what is now known as the Operational Art of Warfare (OPART).

The Operational Art of Warfare emerged in curriculums in which officers studied past conflicts and analyzed both the factors that contributed to victory and the factors that contributed to defeat. As a result, military thinking about the operational level of war expanded and military doctrine became increasingly sophisticated and attentive to the strategy and tactics of warfare. Military historians trace these developments to World War I, which changed the way countries viewed the art of warfare. Armies operating in different theaters required strategic objectives and plans that were applicable to their own strategic environment. The various dynamics that caused military strategists to rethink how warfare would be conducted included, especially, the advent and application of technology which expanded the battlefield; and the realization that armies were progressively getting larger. The implication was that a single battle may not be decisive, and, therefore, tactics could not solely guarantee the accomplishment of the strategic objectives. The end result was the creation of an operational art that linked tactics and strategy.

This research will focus on one component of the operational art of warfare, the concept of a center of gravity (COG) as defined by Carl von Clausewitz, which is critical

to the way militaries devise strategies to defeat an enemy. It is important to note that this concept was created specifically to give military strategists tools to defeat opposing militaries; and it is very successful when used in that context. The reason for this is that, when opposing militaries engage in combat, they generally conduct conventional warfare, which gives them some insight into the types of tactics that may be used. Formally organized militaries are also usually centralized and are typically institutions of the state. Thus, they provide a strategic target for opposing militaries. But how does COG apply to conflict when a state military's opponent is not a state-instituted organization?

B. DEFINITION OF THE MILITARY CONCEPT "CENTER OF GRAVITY"

Modern warfare has evolved to the use of asymmetric tactics by non-state actors to influence the political environment. As these tactics gain popularity it is increasingly important for states to reevaluate the proper strategy necessary to respond, and subsequently defeat, these tactics in an efficient manner. A key component to examining the current form of warfare and its subsequent defeat is the concept of center of gravity. The concept of COG has been a determining factor in wars for nearly two centuries. It was first introduced by Carl Von Clausewitz in his book, *On War*, and today is still a critical issue with regards to planning and executing war strategies. According to Clausewitz,

one must keep the dominant characteristics of both belligerents in mind. Out of these characteristics a certain center of gravity develops, the hub of power and movement, on which everything depends. This is the point against which all our energies should be directed.¹

The only way that a military can achieve its objectives, according to Clausewitz, is to gather intelligence about the enemy's "moral and physical character," including their associated COG.² If the military strategist fails to do so, defeat is almost certain.

In their effort to better achieve success on the battlefield, military strategists have incorporated the concept of COG into several joint publications (JP): JP 3-07, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War; JP 1, Warfare of the Armed Forces of

¹ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans., Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976, 595.

² Joseph Strange and Richard Iron, "Centers of Gravity & Critical Vulnerabilities," Quantico, Virginia: The Marine Corps Association: 1996, 1-12.

the United States; and JP 5-0, Doctrine for Joint Planning Operations. All refer to a wealth of literature that discusses the concept of COG. All claim that a determination of the enemy's Centers of Gravity, and sometimes our own, is critical for planning and executing successful military operations.³ JP 5-0 states specifically that "the most important task confronting campaign planners in this process is being able to identify friendly and adversary strategic centers of gravity."⁴

In an article entitled, "Center of Gravity Analysis" Colonel Eikmeier states that "the center of gravity is too important a concept to guess at."⁵ The widespread emphasis on the concept of COG shows clearly that it is relevant when dealing with military-to-military engagements. It is not so clear-cut, however, when the engagement involves an opponent that is not a state military and that uses asymmetric tactics.

Prior to identifying Centers of Gravity in warfare, it is necessary to identify the nature of the conflict. This is important because participants in a specific conflict have their own unique reasons for fighting, and thus the hub, or critical component, that the opposing military power should target will differ from conflict to conflict. According to Clausewitz, the first and most important strategic question that must be answered is, "What is the nature of the conflict?"⁶ This research will focus solely on non-state actors' use of asymmetric tactics and the conventional militaries that have confronted those tactics.

To properly determine the nature of a conflict involving non-state actors, we must first review the military's existing definition of "terrorism", the tactic most often used in non-conventional warfare. According to JP 1-02, terrorism is:

³ Margaret E. Schalch, "Planning for Peace Operations: The Relevancy of Center of Gravity" (Report) Marine Corps University and Command Staff College, 1997 (accessed February 17, 2005).

⁴ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Joint Doctrine for Campaign Planning," JP 5-00.1, Washington, D.C. January 25, 2002.

⁵ Dale C. Eikmeier, "COG Analysis," *Military Review*, July-August 2004, (accessed February 17, 2006).

⁶ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans., Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976, 88–89.

the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.⁷

A close examination of the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center, shows why reviewing the nature of a conflict is important and why it is difficult to use the COG concept as military planners currently do. The attacks on 9/11 were clearly an act of terror, but no terrorist organization came forward immediately to claim responsibility and no demands were made.⁸

This presented a problem for the United States because the attackers were apparently not sanctioned by a recognized nation-state. Once the culprits were identified as members of a known terrorist group, al Qaeda, however, the United States decided to attack a nation-state, Afghanistan, because it was there that al Qaeda had training camps and was deemed a state sanctuary for al Qaeda terrorists. Thus, the military went in and dominated the area and captured or killed many of the leaders of al Qaeda. They also removed the current ruling party, the Taliban, from power but this did not stop al Qaeda's terrorist activities.

Examining the 9/11 attacks raises the question, "Does the concept of COG apply to the current asymmetric use of terror and other means of non-conventional warfare?" This research will explore that question by looking at previous conflicts that involved non-state actors using terror and other non-conventional tactics against formidable militaries that were trying to combat those tactics.

C. OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter II focuses on the 1954 war in Algeria, in which the Muslim Algerians fought for their independence from the French Fourth Republic-the government in France under the fourth republican constitution. In its colonization of Algeria, France treated the Algerians like second-class citizens. The colonialists rigged elections in an effort to limit the indigenous population's participation in the political arena and instituted reforms that

⁷ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms," Joint Pub 1-02, Washington, D.C., April 12, 2002 (Amended 30 November 2004) (accessed February 20, 2005).

⁸ The National War College Student Task Force on Combating Terrorism, "Combating Terrorism in a Globalized World," (Report) National War College, May 2002, 9-10.

increasingly disenfranchised and marginalized them. As a result, groups of prominent Muslims organized and united their efforts to overthrow the French minority. One group, the National Liberation Front (FLN), became prominent but was not equipped with the resources required to launch a full-scale war against the French. Therefore, they were forced to derive tactics that were favorable in terms of the resources at hand.

The main tactic they used against the French colonialists was a “calculated use of violence,” or terrorism, the common historical tactic of oppressed peoples. The FLN combined those terrorist tactics with sophisticated propaganda in an attempt to influence the French political system into offering them independence. What is significant is that, even though the Fourth Republic had all the military resources necessary to defeat the FLN in a decisive manner, it never did. The problem the Fourth Republic faced was the decentralized nature of the numerous Muslim groups while the groups were supporting the same cause; they acted independently of one another. Primarily, the French army concentrated on disrupting the FLN by capturing and killing its leaders—a method that is consistent with the COG concept—but that tactic had very little success. New leaders quickly replaced the fallen ones.

Chapter III focuses on the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. Throughout history, the Palestinians have never enjoyed the autonomy and sovereignty of a state. In the early 1900s the Palestinians were subjects of the Ottoman Empire; from 1920 to 1948 they lived under British rule. Soon after that, the newly established state of Israel occupied the majority of what had, until then, been known as Palestine. Subsequently, the Palestinians had no formal state identity and were suppressed and deprived of political participation. That status quo would eventually be challenged, however, with the outbreak of the First Intifada.

The word “intifada,” literally, means “to shake off” or “wake from sleep,” which is exactly what happened when the Palestinian uprising began in 1987. At the beginning of the First Intifada there was very little violence, other than rock throwing and the occasional bottle bomb, perpetrated by the Palestinians. Toward the end of the Intifada, terror activities became more prevalent. It seems almost incomprehensible that the powerful Israeli military could not put an end to the Palestinian revolt, considering the

resources that were at its disposal and its indiscriminant use of those resources. Instead, the Israeli forces experienced tremendous difficulties as the level of violence increased. The First Intifada ended with the Oslo Agreements, which were intended to lift the oppression of the Palestinians, but, due to their ineffectiveness, instead led to a second Intifada. The Second Intifada, which is still going on today, has to some extent been the complete opposite of the first, in that the primary tactic used by the Palestinians is no longer merely rock throwing, but terror. The question the chapter explores therefore is, Why has Israel's superior military not been able to defeat the Palestinians and end the violence?

Chapter IV focuses on U.S. involvement in the Middle East. The United States became increasingly involved in the Middle East because of its policy to contain the spread of communism and its need for, and now dependence on, oil. After the Shah was overthrown in Iran and the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the United States began deploying more and more troops in the region. The presence of the American military in the region outraged many Muslims, as they interpreted the Koranic scripture as forbidding the presence of nonbelievers near the site of the Two Holy Mosques, Saudi Arabia. In the backlash against the American military presence and the governments in the region that supported the United States, radical Islamic fundamentalists launched terrorist attacks on both Americans and supportive local governments. The events that took place during 1979 and afterward led to the formulation of al Qaeda, the cause of and central terrorist target in, the current Global War on Terror.

Chapter V concludes and summarizes the thesis's findings. It also points out the future challenges that the U.S. military, and others that attempt to implement the strategic concept of Centers of Gravity, may face if the concept is not altered to gain better applicability in the current asymmetric combat environment. Finally, recommendations concerning the definition and application of the COG concept are also provided.

D. PRIMARY THESIS ARGUMENT

The military concept of a Center of Gravity, as introduced by Carl von Clausewitz, is one of today's most popular concepts for planning strategies to conduct war. Historically, conventional militaries have enjoyed tremendous success when applying this concept with force to subdue other conventional militaries. Conventional

militaries have not been so successful, however, in applying COG concepts against enemies that are not state-sanctioned and that use asymmetric tactics. This research seeks to determine whether the current application of COG as defined by Clausewitz is applicable in the current asymmetric warfare environment. The finding of this thesis is that the current military thinking with regard to, and its application of, a COG are not appropriate or sufficient to defeat the asymmetric tactics used by today's non-state actors.

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II. THE FRENCH FOURTH REPUBLIC VERSUS THE ALGERIAN NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

A. INTRODUCTION

The war fought by the French against the Algerian National Liberation Front (*French Front de Libération Nationale*), or FLN, in the 1950s and early 1960s is an example of how a small, militarily inferior group such as the FLN can achieve its objectives by using terror tactics against a formidable opponent, in this case, the French army. The acts of terror committed by the FLN were not designed to defeat the French army, but rather, to divide the French colonialists, the *Pied-noirs* (named for their black shoes) and the Muslim communities. This strategy by the significantly outnumbered and out-gunned FLN was successful in that their acts of terror caused the French army to react in a way that undermined French and International support. Without public support, the French army was defeated, albeit indirectly.

It was that international audience that eventually, after eight years of savage war, led to the fall of the Fourth Republic and independence for Algeria. The FLN convinced the French citizenry that the professional and well-equipped French army could not quickly or efficiently defeat the FLN. Despite its lesser numbers and weapons, the FLN's use of asymmetric tactics and propaganda frustrated the French military's objective to defeat the FLN by targeting its leadership, which the French considered to be the FLN's key source of power, that is, its Center of Gravity.

This chapter will focus on the protracted conflict between the Fourth Republic and the FLN. The chapter begins with an examination of the formation of the FLN, which shows the Algerian Muslims' main source of contention and the make up of the FLN leadership, which the French army would later perceive as the FLN's COG. Then, the terror acts committed in the months before the Battle of Algiers will be highlighted. The Battle of Algiers is the focal point because it was the most violent and arguably the most significant battle of the conflict. The chapter also discusses the French military response and the reasons that response was unsuccessful. The chapter ends with an

explanation of the results of the battle and a summary of the findings. This methodology illustrates the degree of difficulty that states encounter when they implement the concept of COG in their strategies to defeat non-state forces.

B. FORMATION OF THE ALGERIAN NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

For Algerian Muslims, the question of their national identity was of critical importance. After World War II, they found themselves marginalized and disenfranchised in many respects. After the French ruthlessly crushed the Setif revolt in 1945 and the division and cancellation of various Algerian nationalistic groups, the *Pied-noirs* were briefly enjoyed unchallenged power. The French government, however, was rattled by the events that occurred at Setif, and drew up a new Algerian Bill of Rights in 1947. The statute addressed five reforms that had been demanded by the Muslims for a number of years:

- 1) the suppression of the communes (mixtes), and their replacement by democratically elected local councils;
- 2) the suppression of the military government of the Saharan territories, and their replacement by civil departments;
- 3) the recognition of Arabic as an official language alongside French;
- 4) the separation of Church and State for the Muslims, as for the other religions;
- and 5) the enfranchisement of Muslim women.⁹

The statute was a positive step, but it was also inequitable in regard to population balancing.

The statute did not address the unfair double-college principle, which determined the formulation of two electoral colleges: one made up of the small number of French citizens in Algeria plus the upper-class Muslims; the other made up of the vast amount of average Muslims who were eligible to vote. The French government's failure to address this principle further exacerbated the problem of national identity in Algeria. The following dramatic dialogue captures the essence of the opposing views:

M. Boukadoum: "Don't forget that I'm an Algerian, first and foremost!"

M. Louvel: "That's an admission!"

(From several benches, in the center): "You are French, first and foremost!"

⁹ Allistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 69.

M. Boukadoum: “I am a Muslim Algerian, first and foremost!”

M. Musmeaux: “If you consider the Muslim Algerians as French, give them the rights of the French!”

M. Louvel: “Then let them declare that they’re French.”¹⁰

Thus, in this respect, the statute satisfied only a small part of the populace; in fact, Algerian deputies—especially Messali’s Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (M.T.L.D.) and the Democratic Union of the Algerian Manifesto (U.D.M.A.)—refused to recognize the French Assembly’s ability to legislate the statute.

The elections that followed were rigged, and the M.T.L.D. and U.D.M.A. received disproportionate seats in the Assembly. The leaders of the nationalistic movement in Algeria were outraged, and the rift between the *Pied-noir* and the Muslims continued to grow. The *Pied-noir*, aware of the frustration, tried to “fix” the problem by disrupting the movement leaders. Messali Hadj, leader of the M.T.L.D., for example, was deported to the French Congo, and Ferhat Abbas was placed under house arrest. At that point, the original leaders of the movement began slipping into the shadows, and the World War II war heroes returning to Algeria began to lead the charge.

One such hero, who played a significant role in the quest for Independence, was Ahmed Ben Bella. Twice, he signed up with the French army and during the 1940 campaign he was recognized and awarded for his meritorious service. Reassigned after the fall of France, he joined a Moroccan regiment to fight in the Italian campaign. It was there that Ben Bella formed an admiration for the Italian resistance. But when he returned to Algeria, disgusted with the events that had taken place in Setif, he declined the commission he was offered and instead entered local politics. He became a successful municipal councilor, an office that he later had to abandon because of an altercation in which he shot and wounded an adversary.

As a result Ben Bella changed his name and went underground with the M.T.L.D. Later he was one of the founders of a group called the Organisation Speciale (O.S.),¹¹

¹⁰ Allistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 70.

¹¹ George A. Kelly, *Lost Soldiers, The French Army and Empire in Crisis, 1947-1962*, The M.I.T. Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1965, 157.

which pledged to use all means to fight against colonialism. According to the historian Alistair Horne, “the O.S. was in effect the first nationalist body dedicated to preparing for an armed conflict with France—now considered inevitable—and thereby it became the immediate predecessor of the FLN.”¹² By 1949, Ben Bella was recognized as the most vigorous leader of the Operation Speciale, which had grown to about 4,500 members. It was subsequently disbanded by the French police as a result of the group’s poor security and good French intelligence. Ben Bella was sentenced to eight years imprisonment; the other leaders escaped and either dispersed abroad or joined other anti-French groups in the country. Of the original founders, Ahmed Ben Bella, Ali Mahsas, and Mostefa Ben Boulaid were captured, but escaped; Belkacem Krim, Omar Ouamrane, Lakhdar Ben Tobbal, and Mohamed Boudiaf went underground in Algeria; and Mohamed Khider and Hocine Ait Ahmed found refuge in Cairo.¹³ They are significant because most of them were founders of the FLN and considered the terrorists’ power center, that is, the Center of Gravity that fueled the terrorists.

In 1951, due primarily to the electoral fraud that took place that year, the U.D.M.A. and the M.T.L.D., joined by the Algerian Communist Party, formed the Common Front for the Defense and Respect for Liberty.¹⁴ This front did nothing more than give lip service to the struggle, however, which caused a split in the M.T.L.D., whose two groups, in 1954, began killing each other. The leaders of the *Pied-noir* merely watched the disarray of the Muslim nationalist organizations in delight. The leaders of the O.S. who had been dispersed knew that the division among the ranks would delay the revolt, and in March of 1954, Ben Bella and his fellow escapees called a meeting in Paris. There they agreed on the need for a third force, and by the end of April formed C.R.U.A., the Comité Revolutionnaire d’Unité et d’Action. The founders were Hocine Ait Ahmed, Ahmed Ben Bella, Mostefa Ben Bouliad, Larbi Ben M’hidi, Rabah Bitat, Mohamed Boudiaf, Mourad Didouche, Mohamed Khider, and Belkacem Krim—all of whom were dedicated to the inevitability of an armed revolt and acknowledged that the use of extreme violence would be paramount.

¹² Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 75.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

By mere coincident, the first meeting of the Comité Revolutionnaire occurred on the day the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu. The atmosphere changed and became extremely optimistic because the French army was now thought to be in a position of vulnerability. As rumors of the defeat spread throughout Algeria, it had a positive effect on the C.R.U.A. recruitment. In July 1954, at a meeting of the Committee of Twenty-Two, which comprised the C.R.U.A. and other operatives throughout Algiers, the members voted unanimously to expedite the revolt.¹⁵ And they also decided that once the armed revolt began, it would be an “unlimited revolution” that would not end until full independence was gained by Algeria.

The order was given to all operatives to prepare to fight. Ben Bella, Mahsas, and Boudiaf sought support for arms and propaganda from the Nasser regime. In October, the C.R.U.A. was renamed the Front de Liberation Nationale (in English, the National Liberation Front), or FLN. And on November 1, 1954, the Catholic feastday, All Saints Day, what has been called one of the bloodiest wars for independence officially began.

C. THE MONTHS LEADING UP TO THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS

In June of 1956, Governor-General Lacoste ordered two members of the FLN who were imprisoned in the Barberousse prison to be executed. The order came as a result of pressure from the *Pied-noir* and the general’s need to institutionalize an intended bill of rights. FLN members were furious about the inhumane conditions in the prison and even more infuriated by the news of the executions. As for the prison conditions, Bitat, the leader of the Algiers network who was imprisoned there, wrote: “It is hell, men are beaten with iron bars, the heat is horrible, and they are given salted water to drink.”¹⁶

Saadi Yacef, who was the temporary leader of the Algiers network while Bitat was in prison, was ordered to kill any European between the ages of 18 to 44, excluding women. During the period June 21–24, Yacef’s squads killed forty-nine civilians.¹⁷ These events marked the beginning of random terrorism in Algiers committed by the FLN. The *Pied-noir*’s counterterrorist group retaliated by blowing up a house in Casbah,

¹⁵ Allistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 79.

¹⁶ Ibid., 183.

¹⁷ Ibid., 184.

which was a suspected bomb-making site used by Yacef. The explosion also destroyed three nearby houses, killing seventy Muslims, including women and children.¹⁸ The FLN denied the charge that they had directed bombs against people and vowed to avenge the deaths of the Muslims in the explosion. Albane ordered Ben M'hidi, the appointed leader of the Algiers Autonomous Zone- Z.A.A.,¹⁹ and his executive officer, Yacef, to prepare for a major offensive.

Yacef began recruiting operatives, and by late 1956, he had organized approximately 1,400, among whom were a number of young attractive Muslim women. They would later be used to carry out bombings in places where the men could not gain access. Some of the women were not completely comfortable, however, with the grim fate that the Europeans would suffer as a result of the bombs they would strategically place. But Yacef constantly reminded them of the execution of the FLN members in June and the deaths of the seventy Muslims killed by the Pied-noir counterterrorist groups. That gave them the motivation needed to carry out the first wave of bombings.

1. The First Bombings by the FLN

The first bombings were to take place in the center of European Algiers. The young women who carried out the attack were able to do so because they could infiltrate the area without being subjected to a bodily search. In preparation, the women removed their veils and dressed like *Pied-noir* women would typically dress. The plan was for three bombs to go off at one-minute intervals. The first bomb location, a Milk Bar, was chosen because, on a Sunday evening, the place would usually be filled with *Pied-noirs*, including women and children, on their way home from the beach. The second bomb was placed in a cafeteria on the smart Rue Michelet, a popular gathering place for *Pied-noir* students. The third bomb was placed in an Air France terminus, but it failed to go off.

¹⁸ Allistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 184.

¹⁹ George A. Kelly, *Lost Soldiers, The French Army and Empire in Crisis, 1947-1962*, The M.I.T. Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1965, 192.

Of the first two bombs, the explosion in the Milk Bar had the greatest effect, because the walls there were covered with glass which, once broken, created quantities of glass splinters that proved to be lethal. The bombs killed three people and wounded fifty, including amputating about a dozen limbs, included those of a number of children. The *Pied-noir*, as expected, reacted with violence.

Yacef's organization continued to terrorize the population in Algiers. This was considered a good FLN strategy, because the horrific violence in the A.A.Z. zone created a huge rift in the European and Muslim communities. Schools were closed throughout October, and the Europeans began to carry weapons in fear they would be attacked by Muslims as they approached them on the streets. To further exacerbate the situation, M'hidi and Yacef began to assassinate influential *Pied-noir* leaders. At this point, the FLN's goal was to both increase awareness of what was happening in Algiers and provoke the French into overreacting to the atrocities that were being carried out.

2. The Assassination of Mayor Froger

The first assassination victim was the mayor, Amedee Froger, who was chosen because of his status as a powerful and influential leader of the *Pied-noir* colonialists.²⁰ Yacef chose Ali la Pointe to carry out the mission. Pointe had served a two-year sentence in Barberousse prison, where FLN prisoners persuaded him to join the cause, pointing out that he, too, was a victim of colonialism. He later became one of Yacef's most faithful followers.

On the morning of December 28, 1956, Ali la Pointe shot Mayor Froger three times at point-blank range, killing him. The *Pied-noir* turned out in great numbers for the funeral of their slain leader, an occasion which Yacef viewed as an opportunity to plant another bomb. The bomb exploded in the cemetery, but had little desired effect because of its late placement. Nonetheless, the crowd was outraged. The funeral members began dragging innocent Muslims from their cars and lynching them, and veiled Muslim women were bashed in the head by young *Pied-noir* thugs with iron bars. The mayhem

²⁰ Allistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 187.

continued throughout the remainder of the day, causing the death of four Muslims and injuring another fifty. The situation in Algiers exceeded the police's ability to control it, causing Governor-General Lacoste to request military assistance.

D. THE FRENCH MILITARY RESPONSE

Lacoste summoned General Massu to aid the fifteen hundred police in Algiers with forty-six hundred members of the 10th Para Division.²¹ For the first time in the two years of war, the French military accepted the challenge presented by the FLN and was willing to use the force necessary to deal with it successfully. Their acceptance of the challenge played into the strategy used by the FLN. General Massu was responsible for maintaining order in Algiers, which meant opposing both the terror tactics used by the FLN and the backlash that those tactics created.²²

Massu was selected to restore order because he had a great deal of pride in his job and was a stern disciplinarian. He had also had some experience in maintaining civil order when he carried out a pacification mission in the mid-Sahara. And during the Suez conflict in 1956, he had displayed great determination by declaring that he was prepared to accept thirty to forty percent casualties to get the job done. It was the same type of persona that was to create big problems in the Battle of Algiers.

1. Massu's First Clash with the FLN

The FLN planned a general strike that was to start on January 28, 1957. The strike, which was planned to coincide with a United Nation session in New York, was intended as another strategic move to gain international publicity for the Muslim Algerians' fight for independence. It was to last eight days, a time span that, in the event, proved detrimental to their effort because of the response of the French army. The FLN leadership handed down one specific instruction: strikers were to demonstrate in the most decisive manner the total support of the entire Algerian people for the FLN, its unique representative. The object of the demonstration, they said, was to bestow an incontestable authority upon the Muslim Algerian delegates at the United Nations in order to convince those rare diplomats who were still hesitant or had illusions about

²¹ Allistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 188.

²² George A. Kelly, *Lost Soldiers, The French Army and Empire in Crisis, 1947-1962*, The M.I.T. Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1965, 193.

France's liberal policy.²³ The FLN knew that it would take more than just the killing of colonialists to gain international attention. The leaders thought that the terror that Yacef's organization had wrought on the communities in Algiers, coupled with the FLN's influence on the trade unions, would be enough to sustain the strike over an eight-day period and therefore achieve their goal of exposure.

But the strike plans proved to be a major tactical error, because General Massu had been issued orders to disrupt the strike by any and all means necessary. The day the strike began, Massu ordered his troops to rip the steel shutters off the shops, which left the goods in them exposed and unsecured. A pillage of the goods ensued, which forced the shop owners to rush in to secure and protect their merchandise.²⁴ Once the owners arrived, Massu had his troops threaten to arrest them if they did not remain there and conduct business as usual. He also ordered trucks to go around and collect the strikers and physically make them go to work. The following day, Massu's men continued picking up shop owners, and they also began picking up young Muslims who were not at school. The strike was broken in less than forty-eight hours.

2. The Second Wave of Bombings by Yacef

Yacef planned a wave of bombings that were carried out two days prior to the planned strike. Women were to plant three bombs in the center of European Algiers on a Saturday afternoon. One bomb was placed in the Otomatic, a popular student bar; the others were placed in the cafeteria and Coq-Hardi, a popular brasserie. The bomb in the Coq-Hardi produced the deadliest effect because it exploded under a cast-iron table, causing the iron fragments to pierce and slice through the flesh of the people nearby. The death toll was five, with sixty wounded. Approximately two weeks later, on a Sunday, other bombs exploded in two crowded stadiums. They were also placed by girls, because Yacef's male operatives were often searched and denied access to those types of places.

3. The Net Closes

After a witness of the Coq-Hardi bombing told the police that a woman had sat at the table prior to the explosion, all women leaving the Casbah were searched. The

²³ Allistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 190.

²⁴ George A. Kelly, *Lost Soldiers, The French Army and Empire in Crisis, 1947-1962*, The M.I.T. Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1965, 194.

French then began to concentrate their efforts on finding and destroying Yacef's network. To the French, the leadership in Yacef's network was the Muslim Algerians' center of gravity. The police launched raids and interrogations of operatives soon led to the near destruction of the network. After the arrest and interrogation of bombers resulted in the capture and death of Ali Boumendjel, a young FLN lawyer and a highly significant figure within the leadership, Albane urged the leaders in the area to leave Algiers. When M'hidi realized that the recent events were all the product of the strike, and he began to think that the FLN would soon lose the entire battle.

A network of French informers ultimately led the Paras to Ben M'hidi on February 25, 1957. Less than ten days later Lacoste's press officer released a statement saying that M'hidi had hanged himself in his cell, but the complete story and the truth about M'hidi's death remains a mystery. From a spy on the Algiers police force, the FLN received a report that M'hidi had been killed by paratroops after being tortured. Whatever the truth of the matter, M'hidi's death drew the public's attention to the French army's torture and execution of rebel suspects. French citizens in France then began to refer to the police and army handling of the rebels and the rebellion as *la torture*. In French public opinion, for the next five years of the war, the issue of torture was the main source of controversy. Torture had been abolished in France in 1789, having been documented by French humanists prior to 1789 as inhumane and inefficient. The French people, for the most part, felt that torture was both morally and philosophically wrong, so learning that such tactics were widely used by the French army angered many. In response, General Massu claimed that the atrocious acts being carried out by the FLN warranted those extreme measures. He said that the only way to carry out his assigned mission was to gain intelligence information about the FLN by any and all means necessary. And, in this, he seemed to have the support of Governor-General Lacoste, as rumors of the torture tactics, as well as the actual methods of the torture, were made known to him and he did little to stop it. Lacoste's failure to act played a key role in the destruction of the Fourth Republic and the achievement of Algeria's Independence.

4. Alleg Speaks Out

Henri Alleg, the Communist editor for the *Alger Republican*, a European Jew who had settled in Algeria during World War II, was arrested and interrogated by the French

army. In his book *The Question*, he gives a detailed account of the torture he was subjected to during the interrogation process, including how electrodes were placed on his ears and fingers and his recall of how “a flash of lightening exploded next to my ear and I felt my heart racing in my breast.”²⁵ He also discusses the various forms of water torture that were used: thrusting a suspects’ heads into water buckets until they were half-drowned; a hose shoved into their mouths, filling their lungs and stomachs with cold water, while their nose was stopped up, so they couldn’t breathe. Alleg also mentions the torture of hearing the moans of the suffering of those tortured nearby. His detailed and moving account caused an uproar in France.

5. Pierre Leulliette Speaks Out

Pierre Liulliette, a paratrooper in the French army, echoed Alleg’s account of the French army’s torture practices. He also spoke about how the paras were, in some cases, reluctant to perform torture, but later became accustomed to it. Liulliette talked about how very few paras seemed to realize or even care that some of the suspects being tortured were innocent and how deeply depressed he was by what was happening around him. He recalled how all day long he could hear the cries through the floor boards, cries not unlike the cries of animals being slowly put to death. Liulliette revealed that some of the people who had “disappeared” had actually died as a result of torture and been buried. Again, the French populace was appalled by the atrocities being carried out by their fellow Frenchmen.

6. L’Affaire Audin Disappears

L’Affaire Audin, a member of the same Communist cell as Henri Alleg, was arrested for allegedly providing a safe haven for “terrorists.” The official military report states that Audin tried to escape in the night and shots were fired, however, his body was never found. Other reports suggest that he was murdered and secretly buried. And because of all the previous stories of torture, the French public had lost confidence in reports from the military.

7. Bollardiere and Teitgen Protest

General Jacques de Bollardiere, the Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, who had a very distinguished military career, became involved in the Battle of Algiers because

²⁵ Allistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 200.

of the proximity of his command sector to Algiers. He was outraged by Muslim women's stories of how their sons and husbands disappeared in the night. Bollardiere interviewed General Massu and informed him of his opposition to what was going on under his command. Finally, totally disgusted with what was happening in Algiers, General Bollardiere wrote the commander in chief and requested to be transferred back to France. In a letter to a friend, later published in the *L'Express*, he described how the French army in Algiers was committing immoral acts. His punishment was a sentence of sixty days of fortress arrest.

Shortly thereafter, Paul Teitgen, the French Secretary-General at the Prefecture, sent Governor-General Lacoste his resignation.²⁶ Pressured by the chief of police to have a suspect tortured in an effort to discover where a bomb was scheduled to go off, he refused.

But I refused to have him tortured. I trembled the whole afternoon. Finally the bomb did not go off. Thank God I was right. Because if you once get into the torture business, you're lost. . . . Understand this, fear was the basis of it all. All our so-called civilization is covered with a varnish. Scratch it, and underneath you find fear. The French, even the Germans, are not torturers by nature. But when you see the throats of your copains slit, then the varnish disappears."²⁷

Teitgen, who had been tortured at Dachau, refused to torture himself, something he was adamantly against. The protest by these two prominent figures only increased the anguish the French people felt regarding the French army.

E. CONCLUSION

Seen from a strictly military perspective, it was General Massu who won the Battle of Algiers. The tactics used to win the military conflict, however, when they became known, undermined French support. The French army's use of torture had a profound impact on French public opinion. The Algerian National Liberation Front, on the other hand, was very effective: it gained international attention by its use of terror tactics to provoke a similar response by the French army. The deaths of prominent FLN figures such as M'hidi, Boumendjel, and Audin, along with the detailed stories of torture,

²⁶ Allistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, MacMillan London Limited: London, 1977, 203.

²⁷ Ibid., 204.

described by Alleg and others were instrumental in exposing those practices. These events raised the awareness of people hundreds of miles away who had no first-hand knowledge of what was happening in Algeria. As Dr. Douglas Porch points out in “The Inversion of the Levee en Masse,” a chapter in the book *The People In Arms*, “Even though the levee en masse failed to legitimize the revolutionary movement among the people, such was the power of the levee in the public mind that it invariably helped to legitimize the revolutionary movement beyond the theater of conflict.”²⁸ The French army had won the battle but lost the war.

Typically, states engage in war with states, and there are clear strategic objectives to be achieved by the destruction or significant damage of the enemy’s military forces or the opposing state’s infrastructure. But when a state engages in a war against an opponent that does not adhere to conventional warfare behavior or is not vulnerable to the same consequences, politically and internationally, for its actions, the state will encounter great difficulties in determining the appropriate strategies to use to be victorious. This occurs because of the comparative disproportion between the military force and the force of the non-state actor. In Algeria, for example, when confronted by the widespread terrorist tactics employed by the FLN, the Fourth Republic resorted to torture tactics to obtain intelligence that would lead them to the leadership of the FLN, which they would then destroy.

The army’s critical mistake was its use of military force to counter the asymmetric tactics of the non-state actors, the FLN. Clausewitz’s idea of a center of gravity in conflicts includes the capture or death of the enemy leadership *if* it is believed that their capture or death will lead to a decisive defeat of the enemy. That was not the case in the conflict between the French army and the FLN.

²⁸ Daniel Moran and Arthur Waldron, *The People in Arms*, New York, New York: Cambridge University, 2003, 234.

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III. ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIAN INTIFADAS

A. INTRODUCTION

For centuries, conflicts involving nation-states usually end when one side is the victor and the other sues for peace. The question we are exploring here is, “What happens when a formidable state’s military engages in a conflict with non-state aligned irregular forces?” For the purposes of this research, we focus on two such unconventional forces: terrorists and members of an occupied country or territory who mobilize to overthrow their occupiers. The two types of forces are not mutually exclusive: under occupation, people may, and often do, become insurgents who use terror or asymmetric tactics.

This chapter will examine the Palestinian struggle against the Israelis, and, more specifically, the two Intifadas. The chapter analyzes the 1967 and 1973 wars to show how and why the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) were successful in defeating the opposing militaries in two conventional wars. It will also show the contrast when Israel’s formidable military mobilized to respond to Palestinian rioting, attacks, and eventually use of terror tactics. Faced with that unconventional form of warfare, the IDF became much less decisive and the conflict became increasingly protracted. One of the reasons for that lies in the general tendency of militaries to adhere to theoretical concepts such as Clausewitz’s theory of a center of gravity. Recall from the introduction that Clausewitz defined the COG as the enemy’s “hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends.” I am arguing here that it is difficult for military strategists to devise strategies to defeat non-state forces because the concept of a COG, as traditionally defined, is not applicable to the typical tactics used by the inferior force in asymmetrical warfare.

The method used in this thesis to organize and support the argument is as follows: discuss the success of the Israeli military against the Arab state-instituted militaries during the 1967 and 1973 wars; give an overview of the First Intifada (1987–93); analyze Israel’s response to the first Intifada; examine the period and activities between the end of

the First Intifada and the start of the Second Intifada (September 2000); give an overview of the Second Intifada and describe Israel's response; and, finally, describe the results of the thesis's analyses.

B. ISRAELI MILITARY SUCCESSES AGAINST STATE SPONSORED FORCES, AND THE BEGINNING OF DIFFICULTIES AGAINST UNCONVENTIONAL FORCES

1. The 1967 Six Day War

This war is known as the Six Day War because Israel defeated the combined military forces of Jordan, Syria, and Egypt in six days. It began with Israel's strategic decision to launch a preemptive attack against the Egyptian Air Force that was critical in its eventual victory, because the Egyptians had the most modern aircraft in the Arab Middle East. Israel chose to strike first because of its fear of Egypt's thirty TU-16 Badger bombers, which were capable of inflicting heavy damage on the Israeli military and civilian centers. To the Israelis, the Egyptian Air Force became a Clausewitzian center of gravity because of its potential impact on the outcome of the war.

The Egyptian forces in the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula consisted of "7 divisions, four armored, two infantry, and one mechanized infantry. Overall, Egypt had around 100,000 troops and 900–950 tanks in the Sinai, backed by 1,100 APCs and 1,000 artillery pieces."²⁹ Israel, with no strategic depth and facing seven divisions, mobilized its forces. Several tactical elements made a swift Israeli advance possible: first, the complete air superiority the Israeli Air Force had achieved over its Egyptian counterpart; second, the determined implementation of an innovative battle plan; and third, the lack of coordination among the Egyptian troops.

By June 10, 1967, Israel had completed its final offensive in the Golan Heights and a cease-fire was signed on the sixth day of the conflict, June 11. Israel had seized the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank of the Jordan River (including East Jerusalem), and the Golan Heights. Thus, overall, Israel's territory was increased tremendously, including about one million Arabs now placed under Israel's direct control in the newly captured territories. All made possible because Israel recognized that the

²⁹ Kenneth Pollack, *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948–1991* University of Nebraska Press, 2004, 59.

COG of the Arab forces was the Egyptian Air Force. The preemptive strike on the COG by the Israelis enabled Israel to enjoy air superiority through out the duration of the war.

2. The 1973 Arab–Israeli War

During 1973, the Arab states, believing that their complaints against Israel were going unheeded (despite their threats to cut off oil supplies in an attempt to soften the pro-Israel stance of the United States), quietly prepared for war under the leadership of Egypt’s President Anwar Sadat. On October 6, the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur, the Arab forces launched a two-pronged assault on Israel. Egyptian forces struck eastward across the Suez Canal and pushed the Israelis back, while the Syrians advanced from the north. Iraqi forces joined the war and Syria received some additional support from Jordan, Libya, and the smaller Arab states.

The attacks caught Israel off guard, and it was several days before the country was fully mobilized. Once mobilized, Israel forced the Syrian and Egyptian ground forces back and, in the last hours of the war, established a salient on the west bank of the Suez Canal. These advances were achieved, however, at a high cost in soldiers and equipment. Israel’s strategy had to be modified as their superior air forces could not be utilized due to pre-positioned surface to air missiles by Egypt and Syria. As a result Israel attacked the ground forces-COG- of the Arab states. The end result was a cease-fire, and Israel had proved once again that its military was superior to its Arab neighbors.

3. Israel in Lebanon

Lebanon was engulfed in civil war between the Muslims and Christians, from 1975 to the 1980s; to the jihadists, who were inspired by the Iranian Revolution, Lebanon was viewed as a vulnerable place to launch another Islamic revolution. The instability in Lebanon which was caused by the civil war, created a vacuum that was filled by the Shiite Hezbollah movement. Hezbollah formed as a result of the PLO and Muslim Brotherhood’s inability to Islamize the Palestinian cause in Lebanon. Thus, throughout the 1980s “the Lebanese Hezbollah operated as an agent for growing radicalization of the Shiite community and as a tool for Iranian policy.”³⁰

³⁰ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, London, New York: I.B. Taurus & Co. Ltd., 2004, 127.

In June of 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon to remove the Palestinian threat to their northern border. The Israeli forces were initially welcomed by the majority Shia Lebanese in the south for removing the heavy handed PLO forces, but soon the Lebanese were alienated. Hezbollah soon began attacking the IDF forces, inflicting serious casualties. The invasion was named; “Operation Peace in Galilee,” because of the PLO launched rocket attacks into Jewish towns in northern Galilee.³¹ The Israeli army was successful in driving out the PLO, but its occupation in southern Lebanon led to a counter-offensive by the militants in the Shiite community-Hezbollah. Because the Shiites possessed an inferior force they used asymmetric tactics against the conventional Israeli army. During the remainder of the 1980s Hezbollah staged attacks that brought in a multinational force which consisted of U.S., Italian and French troops; and then launched a series of ruthless attacks on the Israelis and the multinational forces that convinced the Western countries to withdraw their troops.³²

Hezbollah’s asymmetric tactics eroded Israeli public support for the Lebanese war and over time the Israelis were forced into a slow retreat to its borders. In 2000, the Israelis were forced to unilaterally withdraw back to within its boundaries. Hezbollah had proven that it was capable of inflicting military defeat on formidable conventional militaries, an accomplishment that inspired the intifada that began in 1987. Hezbollah’s success against the vaunted IDF, where no conventional forces had succeeded, was seen by all in the region as validation of asymmetrical tactics against a superior conventional force. The Palestinian resistance took notice and soon adopted Hezbollah’s tactics and religious fervor in their fight against the Israelis.

C. THE FIRST INTIFADA

The Palestinians have been subordinated and denied full citizenship rights throughout the twentieth century. At the beginning of the century, they were the subjects of the Ottoman Turks. With the end of World War I and until 1948, they were ruled under a British mandate. Even after the mandate ended, the Palestinians had no national identity and the future was not promising. By 1949, Palestinians who lived in the West

³¹ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, London, New York: I.B. Taurus & Co. Ltd., 2004, 126.

³² Ibid., 128.

Bank had become subjects of the Kingdom of Jordan, and though offered Jordanian citizenship, they were treated as second-class citizens, experiencing both political and economic discrimination. During that same period, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip lived under Egyptian military rule, which they continued to do so until the Israeli conquest of the Strip in 1967. Since then, Israel has maintained a similar level of discrimination, and, in addition, has confiscated Palestinian land for IDF bases and Jewish settlements.

Israel's gain of territory through the 1949 Armistice and its control of the territories it has occupied since the 1967 War has had a significant impact on both the Palestinians and the neighboring Arab countries because of the number of Palestinian refugees that those events created. As the Israeli settlement program in the West Bank and Gaza expanded, more Palestinians lost their land and homes. Coupled with that, the growing Palestinian population and the repression and discrimination employed by the Israeli government steadily increased tensions until a violent backlash became inevitable. The Palestinians feared that as settlements grew in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip they would continue losing their lands, their national identity, and their remaining rights. The clearer it became that Israel's primary intention was to colonize the last remaining Palestinian areas, the more the settlements became the target of the Palestinians' frustration. Finally, the only alternative was organized resistance.

[A]lthough Israel had pushed the PLO as far as possible from its home, and killed many of its leading lights in an effort to stymie effective responses to its policies, the weight of dispossession and eviction ultimately produced a grassroots reaction to the occupation.³³

During Israel's continuing occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Israeli government has prevented the Palestinians from forming a unified political authority that could effectively unite the people to collectively resist the rule of the Israeli occupation. To achieve this policy, the denial of any rival power, the Israeli state has used a three-pronged approach:

The first major component has been the repression and suppression of any organizational vehicle that threatened to succeed in uniting the Palestinian people in opposition to the occupation. The second element has been the

³³ Nicholas Guyatt, *The Absence of Peace: Understanding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, New York: St. Martins Press, 1998, 15.

age-old device of divide and rule: trying to foment divisions within and between resistance movements. An integral part of this second strategy, and the third element in their overall policy, has been the attempt to promote alternative organizational structures with an accommodating and compliant leadership, in order to undermine the claims to legitimacy of those organizations and leaders that the Israelis have deemed to be most threatening to their interests.³⁴

This approach by Israel was aided by the geographic and other divisions that exist within the social structure of the Palestinians: social classes, villages, towns, regions, and different family and clan networks.

On December 9, 1987, after four Gazans were killed in a collision with an Israeli vehicle, protests erupted in the Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. According to the Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre, during the protest a Palestinian youth was shot and killed.³⁵ Eventually, the protest spread throughout the occupied territories and casualties mounted. It is important to note, however, that in the beginning the Palestinian protest was considered non-lethal; it consisted mainly of peaceful demonstrations and rock throwing. But as the rebellion, or “intifada,” continued, more violent actions by the Palestinians increased; and the violent counter-tactics used by the IDF only heightened their anger and resentment.

The movement at the beginning of the Intifada was decentralized, and was led by local activists fueled by local complaints. In most areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip it enjoyed popular participation and a wide repertoire of civil disobedience. There were cases of local committees challenging Israel’s civil administration by such things as opening an underground school system after the Israelis closed the schools; a boycott of Israeli products; people destroying their military identity cards; and a tax rebellion.³⁶ Because the resistance had participation on various fronts, it was able to sustain itself. And unlike military-on-military engagements, the Israeli army had no centralized

³⁴ Andrew Rigby, *Living the Intifada*, London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1991, 18.

³⁵ The Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre, “The Intifada: An Overview of the First Two Years,” JMCC, 1989.

³⁶ Roane Carey, *The New Intifada: Resisting Israel’s Apartheid*. New York: Verso Press, 2001, 212.

authority to attack. The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) claimed to be the authority behind the Intifada, and by 1989 they sought to control and centralize the movement.

Given all these factors and the mass scale of the uprising, it is unlikely that it was initiated by any one person or organization. However, realizing the magnitude of the opportunity to gain power and influence, the PLO was quick to take the reins, providing incitement to the resistance and enhancing their presence in the occupied territories. But the PLO was not the only group that recognized the opportunity. It had to compete in its activities with radical Islamic organizations such as Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. What is significant about this is that the uprising was not led predominantly by any one of those groups. It was led by community councils consisting of ordinary Palestinians creating autonomous structures and networks in the midst of the violent Israeli occupation. The councils focused on creating independent, often underground infrastructures such as autonomous schools, medical care and food aid facilities, and other basic institutions.

D. ISRAEL'S RESPONSE TO THE FIRST INTIFADA

Ultimately, Israel was successful in containing the uprising. The Palestinian force, generally unarmed demonstrators and rock throwers, was drastically inferior to the well-equipped and trained Israeli military force. Nonetheless, the Intifada highlighted numerous operative and tactical problems in the Israeli military's response, as well as the general problem of Israel's prolonged occupation of the Palestinian territories. These problems were noticed and widely criticized, both in international forums—in particular, when humanitarian questions were at stake—and in Israeli public opinion, in which the Intifada had caused a split.

The military violence was the source of criticism internationally and locally. The IDF responded to the Palestinian mass protest by shooting demonstrators with live ammunition, by beating the protesters with clubs and rifle butts, by tear gas attacks and mass arrests, by deportation, and by school and university closures. The objective was to intimidate, repress, and control the activists. The IDF considered the activist and the

leaders who orchestrated the demonstrators as the COG. The Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre (JMCC) noted specific occurrences of each response with the following results.

1. Shootings

At first, the Israeli military responded to the conflict by inflicting direct physical punishment on the Palestinians. The use of live ammunition, tear gas, and rubber bullets to disperse street demonstrators was common. A large number of Palestinians fell victim to the Israeli military forces, even though they were not directly involved in street confrontations or other forms of public protest: some casualties were bystanders; others became casualties while inside their homes. It was also reported by the international press that undercover Israeli hit squads were assassinating Palestinian activists.

2. Beatings

According to a *Jerusalem Post* report, Defence Minister Rabin stated that: “The first priority of the security forces is to prevent violent demonstrations with force, power, and blows. . . . We will make it clear who is running the territories.”³⁷ During the course of two days following the minister’s statement, more than a hundred Palestinians received treatment from hospitals because of broken bones and fractured skulls. On January 25, 1988, the Shifa hospital treated two hundred Palestinians for similar injuries.³⁸

3. Teargassing

According to Amnesty International, tear gas was used “in such a way as to constitute a punitive measure, to harass and intimidate Palestinian residents in the occupied territories.”³⁹ There were reports of instances where tear gas was fired into homes, mosques, hospitals, and schools. As a result of that excessive use, Transtechnology, a U.S.-based manufacturer of teargas, suspended supplies to Israel.

³⁷ The Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre, “The Intifada: An Overview of the First Two Years,” JMCC, 1989.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Amnesty International, “The Misuse of Tear Gas by Israeli Army Personnel in the Occupied Territories,” 1988.

4. Mass Arrests

This tactic was used immediately: between December 9 and January 6, 1988, 1,978 Palestinians were arrested, according to Defense Minister Rabin. As the Intifada wore on, the violence and number of threats increased, primarily because, in protest cycles, as mobilization begins to decline, violence fills the void. Arrests by the Israeli forces increased as well. Al-Haq, a Palestinian human rights organization, reported that by May 1, 1988, upwards of 17,000 Palestinians had been imprisoned.⁴⁰

5. Deportation

Israel was determined to deport anyone the government perceived as a “ringleader” of the uprising. On January 3, 1988, the Israelis charged nine Palestinians with “incitement” and served them with expulsion orders. During the first two years of the Intifada, fifty-eight Palestinians were reported to have been deported.⁴¹

6. School and University Closures

Palestinian schools were ordered closed less than fourteen days after the Intifada began. During the first year, all West Bank and Gaza Strip schools and vocational centers were closed for approximately eight months. The result of the closures was the denial of 310,000 Palestinians’ right to an education. The implementation of curfews was also instrumental in the disruption of school operations. Institutions of higher learning also fell victim to closure orders, because Israeli administration officials perceived that campuses provided a place for people to gather and that unrest would inevitably occur.

The tactics used by Israeli forces were scrutinized because the “enemy” was often ordinary Palestinians who were mobilizing to gain the right and freedom of self-determination. There was no doubt that the IDF would eventually contain the security situation, but the uprising, which started out decentralized, made it difficult for the IDF to pinpoint a Center of Gravity (COG). The Intifada continued, and even after the PLO and

⁴⁰ The Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre, “The Intifada: An Overview of the First Two Years,” JMCC, 1989.

⁴¹ Ibid.

other organizations achieved some control, it was difficult to end. Indeed, the first Intifada did not come to an end until 1993, as a result of the Oslo Agreement, an external political settlement.

E. OUTCOMES

According to the B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights, by the time the Oslo Agreement was signed in 1993, 1,162 Palestinians, 241 of them children, and 160 Israelis, 5 of them children, had died in the violence.⁴² In the first thirteen months of the first Intifada, 332 Palestinians and 12 Israelis were killed.⁴³ The initial high fatality rates suffered by the Palestinians were primarily due to the Israel military's lack of experience in non-lethal pacification and crowd control tactics. When the soldiers faced demonstrators, they usually had no riot-control rubber munitions and would shoot unarmed demonstrators with live rounds. The fatality rate also included Palestinians who were killed by their own side as collaborators.

The Intifada was never a military endeavor in either a conventional or a guerrilla sense. The PLO, which had only limited control of the situation, never expected the uprising to make any direct gains against the Israeli state, as it was a grassroots mass movement and not orchestrated. The goals of the Intifada were to shed the occupation and achieve self-determination; goals that have still not been achieved. However, the Intifada did produce a number of results that the Palestinians could consider positive:

- a. By engaging the Israelis directly, rather than relying on the authority or assistance of neighboring Arab states, the Palestinians were able to identify themselves globally as a separate people worthy of self-determination.

- b. The extreme Israeli countermeasures, especially at the beginning of the Intifada, resulted in international attention to the plight of the Palestinians. The media reporting of Palestinian children being shot and killed for throwing rocks at Israeli soldiers aroused the concern of numerous international spectators. More important, most of the U.S. media outlets openly criticized Israel in a way that previously had never been

⁴² B'Tselem, "Two-thirds of Palestinians Killed in the West Bank This Year Did Not Participate in the Fighting," December 8, 2004 (Internet, accessed March 2005).

⁴³ Ibid.

done. The conflict succeeded in putting the Palestinian question back on the international agenda, particularly in the UN, but also for Europe and the United States as well as the Arab states. As a result, Europe increased its economic contributions to the Palestinian Authority, and the United States began to set conditions on its aid to Israel.

c. The movement also dealt a heavy economic blow to Israel. The Israeli Trade and Industry Minister, Ariel Sharon, stated that “between 1987 and 1988, sales of Israeli products to the occupied territories fell by the following percentages: agriculture products, 60 percent; textiles, 18 percent; clothes, 8 percent; nonmetallic minerals, 10 percent; rubber/plastics, 11 percent; and quarry stone, 8 percent.”⁴⁴ The impact on the tourist industry was negative as well.

d. And although the Oslo negotiations failed to fulfill their potential, it is important to note that prior to the First Intifada, it was doubtful whether there would ever be a Palestinian state. After the Oslo Accords, an independent Palestine of some sort, at some time in the future, seemed a relative possibility.

e. The Palestinians were able to sustain resistance against the formidable Israeli military for nearly six years, whereas most Arab militaries had been defeated handily by the same forces.

F. THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND INTIFADAS

Despite the Oslo Agreement, signed by the PLO and Israeli governments, the Palestinians continued to experience oppression. The Agreement’s signing had been contingent on the Palestinians’ trust that Israel would allow them to have better lives. Since that time, however, Palestinian spokespersons and many others have repeatedly pointed out that that trust continues to be betrayed by the cruel deeds and harsh decrees of the Israeli military,⁴⁵ including: the permit system; detention and torture; land confiscation; house demolition; and environmental and economic exploitation.

⁴⁴ The Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre, “The Intifada: An Overview of the First Two Years,” JMCC, 1989.

⁴⁵ Haim Gordon, Rivca Gordon, *Taher Shtiteh, Beyond Intifada: Narratives of Freedom Fighters in the Gaza Strip*, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2003, 126.

1. The Permit System

The permit system was not a tool designed only to restrict the movement of the Palestinians. Because the system is key in the prevention of groups unifying to oppose occupation, the system actually, in effect, undermines Palestinian nationalism. Also, by their use of the permit system, the Israeli military authorities have effectively divided the Palestinians into three groups:

Jerusalemite Palestinians are the luckiest of all: their identification card enables them to move in and out of Jerusalem and to visit the various Palestinian areas. West Bank Palestinians are not so fortunate; they have relative freedom to move between the big towns, but they cannot enter Jerusalem or Israel without a separate permit. Given the particular emotional, religious, and commercial significance of the capital, this has seriously affected many Palestinians who live just a few miles away from the Holy City. . . . Palestinians from Gaza, meanwhile have suffered most of all. Requiring documentation both to visit the West Bank and to reside there, Gazans have found the permit system to be an effective jail sentence.⁴⁶

The Oslo Agreement guaranteed the Palestinians that the territorial integrity of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip would be maintained, but the permit system undermines that by separating friends and family in the two areas.

2. Detention and Torture

When Israel invaded the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, martial law was ordered as a means to police the Palestinians. Even after the Oslo process, those orders remained in place—solely because it afforded the military the ability to arrest, detain, and torture suspects without scrutiny by the Palestinian Authority. For example, “after the bus bombs of February and March 1996, hundreds of students from Bir Zeit University near Jerusalem were arrested in an enormous dawn raid on their dormitories.”⁴⁷ The significance of that raid is that, since Bir Zeit was in Area B (an area where Israel has full security control), there was nothing that the students, the Palestinian Authority, or the Palestinian police could do.

⁴⁶ Nicholas Guyatt, *The Absence of Peace: Understanding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, New York: St. Martins Press, 1998, 15.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 99.

The terror tactics adopted by Palestinians at the end of the First Intifada applied pressure on the Israeli government to change its policies. Instead, Palestinians were frequently arrested on suspicion of belonging to terror groups and then tortured in the hope that they would yield the names of their colleagues. The possibility, or even probability, that the Palestinian being tortured might be innocent did not deter the torturers.⁴⁸

3. Land Confiscation

From the beginning of its occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel sought to legitimize its claim to the territory. The Israeli leaders took components of laws that had been created by past occupiers and combined them into procedures that would suit Israeli interests. The Oslo Agreement did nothing to counter those laws and assure the security of Palestinian land. Thus, Israel has been able to circumvent and manipulate the system to continually confiscate land from the Palestinians. One illustration of this practice was the state's establishment of a process in law whereby Palestinian land can be legally taken away from its owners for the purpose of building roads or settlements for Israelis only.⁴⁹ The Oslo Agreements proved unable to prevent land confiscation. And the resulting forced homelessness and despair are additional grounds for the incitement of violence and resistance.

4. House Demolition

The bulldozer has been just as essential and effective for the Israeli government as the live rounds that the Israeli military fired at demonstrators armed with rocks. Israel reserves the right to demolish existing homes when it lays claim to the property or when the owners are suspected or accused of criminal behavior, especially as suicide bombers. B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, points out "that only 30 percent of the demolished homes in the West Bank, and 20

⁴⁸ Nicholas Guyatt, *The Absence of Peace: Understanding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, New York: St. Martins Press, 1998, 100.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 103.

percent in the Gaza Strip, belonged to people suspected of being connected with a killing.⁵⁰ Others had their homes destroyed because of a suspicion of incitement, resisting arrest, or throwing a petrol bomb.”⁵¹

5. Environmental and Economic Exploitation

While it is a fact that the West Bank and Gaza Strip has historical and emotional significance for both Jews and Arabs, it is also true that they have critical resources such as water and land. As the number of Jewish immigrants increases, so does the demand for water. Given the overwhelming strength of the Israeli forces and their apparent ability to impose the government’s will, in 1967, all existing wells were placed under Israeli supervision, and no wells could be dug without express Israeli permission.⁵² From an economic perspective, professionals found the settlements in the West Bank appealing because of their proximity to Jerusalem. Thus the government sold to them and invested in the infrastructure in those areas.

As a result of the quite different circumstances that the Palestinians had to live with, tensions peaked and rebellion became inevitable. The peace process did not deliver on the merits of its content: the Oslo Agreement was unsuccessful.

G. THE SECOND INTIFADA AND THE ISRAELI RESPONSE

The Second Intifada began in September 2000, and, unlike the First Intifada, it started with violent confrontations and a large number of casualties. Another key difference was that the Palestinian Authority had sovereign areas and security forces. And though those security forces were inferior in numbers, training, and weapons, the Israelis could and did justify excessive force under a “conduct of war” auspice. The level of the Palestinian violence, which is still being carried out somewhat today, made it easy for Israel to justify its actions. The Palestinians seem to have experienced what Robert Gurr refers to as “radicalization,” a process in which the group has been mobilized in

⁵⁰ B’Tselem, “Two-thirds of Palestinians Killed in the West Bank This Year Did Not Participate in the Fighting,” December 8, 2004 (Internet, accessed March 2005).

⁵¹ Andrew Rigby, *Living the Intifada*, London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1991, 64.

⁵² Sharif S. Elmusa, “The Israeli-Palestinian Water Dispute Can Be Resolved,” *Palestine-Israel Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Summer 1994, 18–26.

pursuit of a social or political objective but has failed to make enough progress toward the objective to satisfy all activists.⁵³ As Gurr points out, when this process occurs, participants either become discouraged or intensify their efforts.

The following bullets are the findings from a 2002 report that the UN Secretary-General prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/10 concerning the violent events that took place at the Jenin Camp highlight the level of violence that has been used throughout this Intifada.

- Since the outbreak of crisis in September 2000, the origins of which have been comprehensively set out in the report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee headed by former Senator George Mitchell, there has been sustained violence between the parties, fluctuating in intensity, causing by 7 May 2002 the deaths of 441 Israelis and 1,539 Palestinians. By the beginning of 2002, the parties were already locked in an accelerating cycle of violent attacks. This cycle of violence further increased in intensity through the early months of this year. The violence reached a high point in the months of March and April, which saw suicide bomb attacks against Israelis by Palestinian groups increase in frequency, and two waves of incursions by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) into Palestinian towns and villages in the West Bank, including areas under the administrative and security responsibility of the Palestinian Authority.
- On 12 March 2002, after a series of terrorist attacks carried out by Palestinians earlier in that month, and as the first wave of IDF incursions into the West Bank was coming to a close, I told the Security Council in a briefing that I believed that Israeli-Palestinian tensions were at boiling point and that the situation was the worst in 10 years. I called on Palestinians to stop all acts of terrorism and all suicide bombings, stating that such attacks were morally repugnant and caused harm to their cause. I called on Israelis to stop the bombing of civilian areas, the extrajudicial killings, the demolitions, and the daily humiliation of ordinary Palestinians. I asserted that such actions gravely eroded Israel's international standing and fuelled the fires of hatred, despair, and extremism among Palestinians. Finally, I urged the political leaders of both peoples—Prime Minister Sharon and Chairman Arafat—to lead their peoples away from disaster.
- Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israelis continued, followed by Israeli military incursions into Palestinian areas. On 4 April, one week into the second wave of incursions in the West Bank—the Israeli Defense Forces' Operation Defensive Shield— I again briefed the Security Council and

⁵³ Ted R. Gurr, "Terrorism in Democracies: When It Occurs, Why It Fails," In *The New Global Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls*, edited by Charles W. Kegley, Jr., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003, 203.

called on all members of the international community to consider urgently how best to intercede with the parties to persuade them to draw back from their present course. I told the Council that self-defense was not a blank check, and that responding to terrorism did not in any way free Israel from its obligations under international law, nor did it justify creating a human rights and humanitarian crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Equally, the Palestinian Authority seemed to believe that failing to act against terrorism, and inducing turmoil, chaos, and instability, would cause the Government and people of Israel to do which I believed they would not. I called on the Government of Israel to comply with Security Council resolution 1402 (2002) and withdraw its forces from the Palestinian territory it had occupied during Operation Defensive Shield. I urged Chairman Arafat to exercise political leadership and set the course for the future of his people.⁵⁴

The nature of this conflict clearly illustrates how resistance movements, no matter how centralized, are increasingly tough to dismantle with the use of military force. Israel possesses the most technological advanced military in the region, but the Intifada continues, and their control of the occupied territories remains tenuous.

H. CONCLUSION

Following its victories against Arab armies in 1956, 1967, and 1973, the Israeli Defense Forces were frustrated: there was simply no Clausewitzian Center of Gravity to be found in unconventional forces like Hezbollah in Lebanon and the PLO, and Islamic Jihad in the occupied territories and Israel. The Intifadas represented a mass mobilization of resistance for the years and years of oppression experienced by the Palestinians due to occupation. The movements clearly presented problems for Israel as violence escalated from the beginning of 1987 and continue to some extent presently. But Israel faced two very different enemies in the Arab militaries of Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and other Middle Eastern countries during the 1967 and 1973 Wars and in the Palestinians during the Intifadas. Nonetheless, the tactics were similar in that in the Intifadas, Israel directed its military force at the movement's leadership which it considered the source of the unrest. Those leaders were thought to be critical to the success of military operations. The strategic decision to target the leaders followed the concept of COG that was presented by Clausewitz as well as the doctrine that the United States employs today.

⁵⁴ Report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to General Assembly Resolution ES-10/10: 30 June 2002, Tenth emergency special session, Agenda item 5, Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

On the other hand, Israel's use of the COG concept during the 1967 and 1973 Wars proved to be correct as Israel decisively won the Six Day War and pushed opposing forces back prior to the cease-fire during the 1973 War. Clausewitz's COG is applicable when the participants in a conflict are state militaries employing conventional war tactics under the rules and laws established by the international community. But the COG concept as currently applied is not applicable when the use of a state's military is deployed to combat hostile non-state forces that use asymmetric tactics. This is the reason that the first Intifada lasted nearly six years and the second is still underway.

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IV. THE UNITED STATES VERSUS RADICAL ISLAMIST TERRORISTS

A. INTRODUCTION

With the end of the Cold War, the United States became the sole superpower and achieved a status of hegemony. This role has caused the U.S. to spread its influence throughout the world, but most importantly throughout the Middle East.

But as the U.S. economy grew to its present status, so did its dependence on oil resources. And the United States' economic and military presence in the Middle East outraged many Muslims, some of whom responded with acts of terror against U.S. military personnel and citizens. Although the strength of the U.S. military is unmatched in the world, the asymmetric tactics used by non-state actors have proven more difficult to combat. Since September 11, 2001, the strategies used by the United States to fight the Global War on Terror—which primarily consists of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom—are based on strategies military officers have been taught to use to conduct war against another state military. Those strategies include as a central element the concept of a fighting force's "Center of Gravity" (COG).

The reason COG, as traditionally defined, is not applicable for this type of asymmetric environment is because non-state actors do not have a critical central component, or "hub," that an opposing conventional military—such as the U.S. military—can target. The enemy that is perpetrating acts of terror against Americans is largely faceless and operates in small groups, or cells, that are usually independent of one another. Since September 11th, the United States has sought to find and capture or kill leaders of the various terrorist networks. Such a strategy is consistent with the concept of COG, and some operations have, to a certain degree, been successful. Nonetheless, acts of violence against the United States and its allies continue.

This chapter will examine the historical events that led to U.S. involvement in the Middle East and the so-called Jihadists, who are launching acts of terror against Americans. The chapter will also analyze the recent conflicts that the U.S. is engaged in

the Middle East under the umbrella of the global war on terror. The purpose of this review is to illustrate some of the problems, such as the protracted nature of conflicts that a traditional application of the concept of COG against non-state actors presents.

B. BACKGROUND

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has enjoyed a military advantage over the armies of all other countries throughout the world. The position of “world superpower” comes with unique responsibilities, including global policing, that require enormous amounts of resources. The United States also has the largest economy in the world, which affords it the resources to fulfill its hegemonic responsibilities. As the world’s largest industrial nation, the United States must also protect the interests that allow its market-based economy to thrive. It is within that context that threats such as global terrorism present a challenge to the United States’ national security.

As the largest importer of crude oil, the United States must now compete with growing economies such as China and India. According to the Energy Information Administration/International Energy Outlook 2003 (EIA/IEO), the world demand for crude oil will increase from 78 million barrels per day (bpd) to 119 million bpd by 2025.⁵⁵ And because the Middle East is the largest exporter of oil, stability in the region is a priority for the United States.

The United States first realized its vulnerability with respect to Persian Gulf oil resources during the Arab Oil Boycott in 1973. Following the boycott, in 1979, the Shah of Iran was overthrown by radical Islamist revolutionaries; and later that year, on Christmas day, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. In light of these events, Washington was forced to take a more active role in the region if its interests were to be protected.

Prior to 1979 the United States had had only a small military presence in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. But after 1979, in an effort to project force into the region and establish bases to operate from, the United States ramped up its military capability there. The U.S. footprint that was created in Saudi Arabia during the first Gulf

⁵⁵ Energy Information Administration, International Energy Outlook 2005, Report# DOE/EIA, July 2005.

War during 1990–91 caused both regional and international dissent, as many Muslims interpret the Koran as banning all infidels from the land that is home to Islam’s Two Holy Mosques.

Anti-Americanism, which was connected to the new Iranian regime, soon spread to Lebanon, Libya, and Syria. The terrorist attacks on the U.S. Embassy and the Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983 and the Libyan attack on Pan Am Flight 103 in 1988 were three of the most violent foreign terrorist attacks against Americans prior to September 11, 2001.

1. The Iranian Revolution 1979

The Iranian Revolution made everyone within and outside the Muslim world suddenly aware of militant Islamism. Prior to the revolution, Iran had enjoyed prosperity, largely due to the high price of oil: it was the world’s second largest exporter after Saudi Arabia.⁵⁶ Iran’s army was also among the largest in the world and was the regional power used to police the Gulf and protect the Indian Ocean from Soviet expansion. The United States provided the Shah, its greatest ally in the Gulf, with sophisticated weaponry to protect the U.S. interest in oil and to aid Iran’s containment of communism. One consequence of this close relationship was the large U.S. presence required to maintain the sophisticated weaponry and oil-related technology.

Ayatollah Khomeini deeply resented the U.S. influence and the presence of U.S. personnel on Iranian soil. And, like many other Iranians, he believed that the United States was taking the place of the British as a dominant force in Iran. His public defiance and accusations against the Shah resulted in his fifteen-year exile, “during which the ayatollah developed his political theology for the future Islamic Republic of Iran and from which he returned victorious in February 1979, carried aloft by the triumphant revolution.”⁵⁷

But why did the revolution occur? The primary factor was the political dissent among the urban poor, the middle class, and student radicals, the source of which was the

⁵⁶ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, London, New York: I.B. Taurus & Co. Ltd., 2004, 106.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 107.

imperial system. The regime promoted policies that modernized the country and encouraged the growth of an educated middle class, but did not allow that class political inclusion. This and the absence of democratic principles such as freedom of speech and of the press fostered an environment that allowed radical sentiment to grow.

The radicalism began with the students and had two ideological sources: Marxism and an Islamic movement known as “socialist Shiism.” The Marxist group grew among the intellectuals, but was not popular among the ordinary people because of its foreign nature. In the early 1970s, the Marxist-Leninist People’s Fedayeen, a group that tried to impose the ideology of Mao on the Iranians, had provoked an uprising, but was suppressed by the monarch.

The Shah continued to promote policies of modernization, which caused unrest among the devout middle class—who were associated with the market place—and the numerous immigrants in the countryside who migrated to the cities. The immigrants moved into the cities in the hope of obtaining prosperity, but ended up settling into the packed slums of Tehran.⁵⁸ Many people in the middle class prospered, but the gap between it and the commercial elites widened due to the elites’ access to businesses dealing with the military and oil. Among the two social classes, the unrest continued to grow, as poor living conditions and economic uncertainty persisted.

The regime continued to alienate the devout middle class and the migrants from the countryside, who eventually became a part of the urban working class. As a result, the two classes assumed a general point of view that was filtered through Shiism. The mosque became the source of order and provided social services that the regime was unable or unwilling to provide.

The rift between the secular, modernist ideology and religious networks increased. While the imperial power sought to marginalize the clergy, support for Shiism was growing at a rapid pace. And thus, the most significant error that the Shah made was not establishing reliable representation in the hierarchical Shiite clergy.

⁵⁸ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, London, New York: I.B. Taurus & Co. Ltd., 2004, 108.

In 1975, oil prices declined, creating more stress on the social classes as well as on the economy of the state. The response by the Shah played a key role in his demise because of the reaction it incited.

[T]he regime reacted by launching a large-scale anti-speculation campaign that hit the bazaar very hard; its best known merchants were thrown into prison and publicly humiliated. From that moment on, the merchants bitterly opposed the shah, and their guilds (*asnaf*) became conduits for the mobilization of men and means to bring him down.⁵⁹

The inevitability of regime change was drawing near as the civil society was on the verge of disruption.

The next four years proved devastating for the Shah. In 1976, the newly elected U.S. President, Jimmy Carter, targeted the brutal tactics of the regime in his global push for human rights. The following year witnessed demonstrations by the liberals who opposed the regime, which met little repression from the regime. In 1978, a government-supported newspaper article insulted Ayatollah Khomeini, who was in exile in Iraq, which caused many Muslims in Iran to rise in his defense. The stage was set. Khomeini mobilized all the mosques, a clerical network supported by over 20,000 properties and buildings throughout Iran, where people gathered to talk and receive orders.⁶⁰ In January of 1979, the Shah was driven out of Iran, and, at the beginning of February, the Party of the Islamic Revolution (PIR) was established.

The overthrow of the Shah adversely impacted the United States and U.S. policies in the region, since the new regime was deeply anti-American. Later in 1979, when the Shah entered the United States for cancer treatment, a PIR official led a group of Khomeini followers into the American Embassy and took fifty-two U.S. diplomats hostage. In 1982, after President Reagan ordered Marines into Beirut following the Israeli invasion in June of that year, the Iranian-supported Hezbollah faction in Lebanon

⁵⁹ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, London, New York: I.B. Taurus & Co. Ltd., 2004, 110.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 111.

responded to the new American military presence there by staging devastating car bomb attacks on the U.S. Marines barracks and twice on the U.S. embassy.⁶¹ Thus, the Americans witnessed for the first time the extreme violence of Middle East terrorism.

2. Iraq–Iran War

The Iraq–Iran War began in 1980 when Saddam Hussein invaded Iran. There was speculation that the United States had supported the Iraqi invasion with hopes that Saddam would seize Khuzistan, which was rich with oil, and the new Iranian regime would collapse due to a lack of resources. The Islamic Republic of Iran, a country with three times the population of Iraq, responded fanatically to fight the Iraqis. The Reagan Administration decided that Saddam Hussein should not be allowed to be defeated by a radical Islamist, anti-American regime in Tehran.⁶² The United States, therefore, set out to assist Iraq, hence increasing its involvement in the Middle East and its support of a secular dictator against radical Islamists.

Shortly after the war began, both sides endured heavy casualties and the war became a stalemate. The United States sought options to prevent an Iraqi defeat and soon began assisting Saddam by intelligence sharing, loans, and pressure on countries that were supplying the Iranian military.

Later, in 1986, as the war expanded to attacks against oil tankers in the Gulf, the Soviet Union offered to send its navy to the Persian Gulf to protect the Iraqi and Kuwaiti tankers. Not surprisingly, the Reagan Administration deeply opposed the notion of Soviet ships patrolling the oil lanes and suggested that the Kuwaiti tankers, which were being attacked as well, be re-flagged as U.S. vessels. The idea was that their registration and names be changed so that, as “American ships,” they would be subject to the protection of the U.S. Navy.⁶³ Saddam and the Kuwaitis accepted the suggestion and the United States sent warships to the Persian Gulf to protect the re-flagged tankers.

However, the United States was also providing assistance to Iran, in the form of weapons and intelligence, in an effort to gain a strategic opening. The arrangement was

⁶¹ Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror*, New York: Free Press, 2004, 40.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 42.

made public in November of 1986, part of what was termed “the Iran-Contra Affair.” Faced with the exposure of the scandal, President Reagan decided to tilt U.S. support to Saddam. Playing both sides did little to enhance U.S. credibility in the region and fueled the anti-American sentiment that was already rapidly spreading throughout the region.

3. The United States Strengthens its Military Cooperation with Israel

Recognizing the threat of possible Soviet military involvement in the Middle East, the United States sought to firm up its military relations with Israel. The threat posed by the Soviets to the eastern Mediterranean caused the Reagan Administration to seek stronger military ties with Israel primarily because of its strategic location and, possibly, because it was the only state in the Middle East that was democratic. In any event, the United States proposed “Strategic Cooperation” with Israel.⁶⁴

The U.S. relationship with Israel has grown steadily over the years since 1967, and has provided Arab radicals with propaganda to recruit terrorists in support of their anti-American cause. Still today, the Arab radicals (and many Arabs, in general) protest the strong U.S.-Israeli relationship, largely because of the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict. They accuse the United States of being biased toward Israel in its continued occupation of the Palestinian territories.

4. The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan

The Soviets invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, and the United States soon saw this as an opportunity to engage the Soviets in a proxy war that would financially strain the Soviet economy. During that period, both superpowers sought strategies other than direct military engagement to weaken the opposing side. The strategy implemented by the United States was to supply the Afghan and incoming Arab fighters with resources that would increase the Soviet costs for the war. The Pakistani intelligence service was the conduit for much of the U.S. and other covert assistance. Saudi Arabia was also a major contributor to the Afghan fighters. In 1989, the Soviets decided to pull out of the country, which meant that a group of irregular fighters had successfully defeated a superpower. According to the former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Intelligence, Richard Clarke, “Pakistani military intelligence funded by the U.S. and Saudi

⁶⁴ Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror*, New York: Free Press, 2004, 45.

governments and [charitable] organizations, had turned groups of nineteenth-century Afghan tribesmen and several thousand Arab volunteers into a force that had crippled the mighty Red Army.”⁶⁵ Many of those volunteer Arab fighters would become the terrorist network known as al Qaeda.

The United States made several critical mistakes in the 1980s that continue to plague America today. First, by using the Pakistani intelligence service, the United States failed to establish any direct relations with the Afghans and the volunteers who were on the ground. Second, the United States allowed the Saudis and other Arab states to recruit volunteers for the fight in Afghanistan without knowing what they would do after the Soviets pulled out. The Saudis were the major player in recruiting and funding the Arab volunteers sent to Afghanistan. Many of those recruits had ties with fundamentalist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood; others were trouble-makers in their own societies. Third, after the Soviets were defeated, the United States quickly withdrew all its resources, thereby removing any leverage they might have had in regard to the future of the country, and leaving Afghanistan to its own fate. Upon the withdrawal of the Soviets, the country erupted into years of civil war, and by the mid-1990s, the Pakistan intelligence service used its influence to support the Taliban. The Taliban, in turn, invited the Arab veterans of the war, al Qaeda, to fight for their cause against the Northern Alliance. Fourth, the United States did little to assist Pakistan in dealing with the thousands of Afghan refugees who fled to Pakistan during the civil war. Pakistan, armed with nuclear weapons, was now politically unstable and the home for thousands of Islamic fanatics and many Arab misfits.

5. The First Gulf War

The first Gulf War began on January 16, 1991, and ended in March of that same year when a U.S.-led coalition handily defeated the Iraqi forces in a conventional military conflict. The event that led to the war was Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. When the U.S. received confirmation of Saddam’s invasion, President Bush’s Administration immediately realized that something had to be done. There was grave concern that if Saddam was permitted to advance without consequence, nothing would

⁶⁵ Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America’s War on Terror*, New York: Free Press, 2004, 50.

stop the Iraqi units from seizing the eastern oil fields of Saudi Arabia. The implications of such actions would mean that Saddam would control most of world's available oil, putting him in a position to dictate to the United States and the rest of the world.

A decision was made to defend the Saudi oil fields, Operation Desert Shield, and to liberate Kuwait, Operation Desert Storm. Prior to the launch of any operations, however, President Bush sought approval from the Saudis to allow U.S. forces into the country. In a meeting held in Saudi Arabia, Dick Cheney, then secretary of defense, told the Saudi king that the United States believed that the kingdom might be in danger. The Iraqis would possibly continue south from Kuwait and seize the Saudi oil fields.⁶⁶ The king agreed to allow the U.S. forces into Saudi Arabia, even though some members of the royal family were deeply opposed.

A number of Muslims protested the allowance of nonbelievers into the Kingdom of the Two Holy Mosques. Among them was Osama Bin Laden. In an effort to ease dissension, the Saudis and the United States set out to garner support from other Arab Nations, including Egypt, Bahrain, Syria, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and other Gulf countries. At the onset of the war, the U.S.-led coalition numbered approximately thirty-four countries, which launched an operation that was an overwhelming success.

At the conclusion of the war, the United States increased its cooperation with many Arab countries in the region. That cooperation, which meant a greater U.S. military presence in the region, caused more radical Muslims to lash out at their governments which they viewed as corrupt and too close to the United States. One end result was the spread of anti-Americanism and the call for jihad.

C. AL QAEDA JIHAD

To better understand the jihad that bin Laden calls for against America, we must first understand what the word "jihad" itself means. The Arabic word "jihad" refers to protecting the Islamic faith and is a call for a holy war against the enemies of Islam. Sheikh Atiyyah Saqr, a well-respected Muslim scholar associated with the Al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo, defines "jihad" this way:

⁶⁶ Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror*, New York: Free Press, 2004, 58.

The word means exerting effort to achieve a desired thing or prevent an undesired one. . . . Among the types of jihad are struggling against one's desires, the accursed Satan, poverty, illiteracy, disease, and all evil forces in the world. . . . Jihad is also done to avert aggression on the home countries and on all that is held sacred, or in order to face those who try to hinder the march of the call of truth. In Islamic Shari'ah [law] jihad in the Cause of Allah means fighting in order to make the World of Allah most high and the means for doing so is taking up arms in addition to preparation, financing, and planning strategy.⁶⁷

This definition sheds light on why radical Muslims believed that the Afghan jihad against the Soviets was necessary. It also shows why, given their perception and interpretation of U.S. actions, they believe that a jihad is also warranted against America.

The conflict between fundamentalist Islam and the West, centers on Koranic scriptures that suggest that it is the duty of Muslims to protect their faith and to convince nonbelievers that Islam is the only way to enter the Kingdom of Allah. It was this belief from the scriptures that has historically been the source of contention between Islam and the West. It was the source of the conflict during the Crusades and the colonial era and continues to be the source of contention in present-day conflicts.

In 1996, bin Laden issued a Declaration of War against America because American military forces were occupying the land of the Two Holy Places. Bin Laden used the term "Crusaders" to refer to the United States and "Zionists" to refer to Israel. In the declaration, he called on Muslims to join the fight against the Crusaders, who were occupiers in Saudi Arabia, and the Zionists, who are occupying Palestine. Nearly two years later, on February 23, 1998, Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri (leader of a jihadist group in Egypt), Abu-Yasir Rifa'I Ahmad Taha (Egyptian Islamic Group), Shaykh Mir Hamzah (secretary of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan), and Fazlur Rahman (leader of the Jihad Movement in Bangladesh) declared a jihad against the U.S. government by issuing a fatwa—a legal opinion produced by a jurisconsult—against America and Israel, despite lacking the proper Islamic clerical credentials to do so.

The difference between bin Laden's jihad and the one issued in 1998 is that the latter used much stronger language.

⁶⁷ Monte Palmer and Princess Palmer, *At the Heart of Terror: Islam, Jihadists, and America's War on Terrorism*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004, 11-12.

The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies-civilians and military-is an duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim.⁶⁸

The CIA and FBI linked al Qaeda to the 1993 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, but bin Laden did not follow up on the fatwa until 1998, with the August 7 attacks on the U.S. Embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. They claimed the lives of nearly 300 people, of which twelve were Americans, but most were African Muslims. This attack was the jihadists' first actual act of war against the United States.

The Clinton Administration responded by launching an attack on al Qaeda training camps and the alleged location of a meeting of top al Qaeda officials. The U.S. Navy launched a number of cruise missiles, but bin Laden escaped. Al Qaeda launched additional terror attacks against the U.S., including the October 2000 attack on the USS COLE in Yemen. And in 2001, bin Laden would launch the attacks that stunned Americans and the world.

1. The September 11th Terrorist Attacks

The level of cruelty and violence perpetrated against mankind in New York and Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001, far exceeded any terrorist attack against the United States in the history of the country. Al Qaeda successfully planted sleeper cells into the United States to develop the skills necessary to use U.S. aircraft as weapons. The world was stunned, as many watched live coverage of the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, killing thousands of people on U.S. soil. Soon after those three attacks, a fourth hijacked plane crashed in Pennsylvania.

Al Qaeda proved that its organization's reach extended far beyond the boundaries of any country or region: as The 9/11 Commission Report pointed out, the jihad declared by the terrorist network was global.

The 9/11 attack was an event of surprising disproportion. . . . It was carried out by a tiny group of people, not enough to man a full platoon. Measured on a governmental scale, the resources behind it were trivial. The group itself was dispatched by an organization based in one of the

⁶⁸ Terry McDermont, *Perfect Soldier*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2005, 269.

poorest, most remote, and least industrialized countries on earth. . . . To us, Afghanistan seemed very far away. To members of al Qaeda, America seemed very close. In a sense, they were more globalized than we were.⁶⁹

The terrorists used the new tools of globalization, especially the rapid movement of people and knowledge across international borders, to launch the horrific attacks on 9/11. What the world asked was; How would the United States respond?

D. GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

The Bush Administration began to draw up plans to invade Afghanistan with the hope of killing or capturing al Qaeda leaders in what would be called a Global War on terror (GWOT). The initial response was to hunt down al Qaeda, and, preferably, bin Laden, in an effort to disrupt the terrorist network in Afghanistan. Many argued that the next step was to overthrow Saddam Hussein.

1. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)

The attack on Afghanistan, Operation Enduring Freedom, commenced on October 7, 2001, with the objective of destroying terrorist training camps and infrastructure, capturing al Qaeda leadership, and achieving a cessation of terrorist activities in the country. In this operation, the U.S. military's strategy was consistent with the concept of center of gravity: the leadership and training camps were considered al Qaeda's critical components and thus the key targets for the U.S.-led coalition. The problem with this strategy, however, was that, while important, the training camps were not as important as the underlying fundamentalist Islamist ideology. The U.S. government either did not know or ignored the fact that many radical Muslims around the world believed in the al Qaeda cause and were willing to die for it. Because of what they perceived as Western injustice in the Islamic world, the people who launched the 9/11 and other attacks believed it was their duty as Muslims to wage war on the "infidels." Furthermore, a majority of the terrorists were (and are) faceless, coming from a vast worldwide pool of volunteers. Hence, there is no way to capture or kill all of the potential future recruits or leaders who will fill the voids left by those captured or killed.

The United States and the coalition have had some successes in capturing al Qaeda operatives, but terrorist attacks continue to persist against Western targets abroad,

⁶⁹ Faisal Devji, *Landscape of the Jihad*, New York: Cornell University Press, 2005, 1.

including in Europe. The actual al Qaeda network may have been fragmented, but that only presents new problems, as the coordination of the network is reduced and the targets diversified. The fact is that we do not know how many supporters al Qaeda has, where they are, or when they might attack. This makes it increasingly difficult to apply hard power, and a COG-influenced strategy, against the asymmetric tactics used by the jihadists.

2. Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)

Following its rapid success in Afghanistan, the Bush Administration, concerned about Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction and possible connections with terrorists, turned its attention to Iraq. Determined to oust Saddam from power, it launched an attack, invading Iraq on March 19, 2003. The United States and its coalition partners, in an amazing show of force, in what was called Operation Iraqi Freedom, demonstrated once again how successful the U.S. military can be when fighting an enemy in a conventional war. Stealth fighters and Tomahawk missiles targeted numerous locations in Baghdad, followed by a precise strategic bombing campaign referred to as "Shock and Awe." Troops advanced into Iraq and swiftly stormed into Baghdad within three weeks of crossing the Kuwait-Iraq border.

The intention of the shock and awe tactic was to affect, influence, and control the will and perception of the adversary, the Iraqi government and military.⁷⁰ Technology made it easy to accomplish the mission. It would not have mattered how prepared the Iraqi army was, there was no chance for it to be successful against the professional personnel and sophisticated weaponry of the U.S. military. The strategy to attack the capital and the Iraqi army—the perceived centers of gravity—proved to be a success, as the major combat operations were completed in less than two months. However, the insurgency that began shortly after the conclusion of combat operations continues three years later to launch indiscriminant terror attacks on both Americans and Iraqis.

During the prewar planning phase, the United States failed to develop a comprehensive plan for the post-conflict environment. The result of that neglect to properly plan is an insurgency that threatens the security of everyone in Iraq. Weapons

⁷⁰ Harlan Ullman, *Finishing Business: Ten Steps to Defeat Global Terror*, Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2004, 54.

and money are smuggled to the insurgents to disrupt reconstruction of Iraqi security forces, as well as to assist in the prevention of a government that would be influenced by the United States. Due to the insurgency and the U.S. failure to properly plan for post-conflict operations, the United States has lost the strategic initiative in Iraq. The insurgents use asymmetric tactics and, because most of them are Iraqis, blend in with the overall population, making them extremely difficult to combat. The conventional warfare lasted only two months; the insurgency has lasted more than three years. Currently, the United States faces a daunting task in trying to regain the strategic initiative—indeed it may be impossible at this point.⁷¹

E. CONCLUSION

The U.S. began ramping up its involvement in the Middle East in 1979, the same year that the Iranian Revolution occurred and the Soviet's invaded Afghanistan. The reason for the increase of American forces in the region was to protect the international oil flow and contain the spread of communism. American forces in the region effectively carried out both missions; but in doing so, they also created anti-American sentiment among many Muslims communities and countries. The result has been an increased number and lethality of terror attacks on Americans, as radical fundamentalist Muslims viewed, and continue to view, the U.S. as supporters of Israeli aggression and as illegal and forbidden occupiers of the most holy Islamic places in Saudi Arabia. They also view Middle East governments that assist the United States as corrupt and launch terror attacks against those countries as well.

The U.S. involvement in the region led to the Americans fighting the first Gulf War, Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. While extremely successful in conventional warfare, due to the U.S. use of sophisticated weaponry and the skills of the men and women who operate it, the same cannot be said about how the U.S. military has fought the unconventional warfare of the insurgents and terrorist networks. In Afghanistan and Iraq, the United States sought to locate the enemy's center of gravity—the central component that was the source of its power—and to destroy it. In an insurgency, however, that is not easy to do, primarily because the

⁷¹ James A. Russell, "Strategic Implications of the Iraq Insurgency," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 8, No .2, June 2004, 48.

enemy is not part of a massed state army and thus does not have a state capital or central state government. It is the combination of these factors that make it difficult for the United States to define, seek out, and neutralize the centers of gravity of radical Islamist groups and to defeat the threat posed by this amorphous enemy.

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V. CONCLUSION

A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The cases analyzed in this research suggest that conventional militaries have a difficult time conducting operations against non-state actors that use asymmetric tactics, particularly terror tactics. To understand how this phenomenon occurs, it is important to analyze the strategy of conventional forces.

The tactics used by conventional forces fit perfectly with the military concept that Carl von Clausewitz called a “center of gravity” (COG), by which he meant a tangible, or at least a measurable, component of an enemy military’s will or ability to fight. The reason this concept does not fit unconventional warfare lies in the meaning of COG as defined by Clausewitz: “the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends.”⁷² The word “hub” means “a center of activity or a focal point,” which implies that the concept is valid only if the enemy has the unity or independence to act as a single body.⁷³ Therefore, before applying the concept, military planners must consider whether the enemy at hand can act as a single entity. If the findings suggest that it can, then the next step is to determine and confront what the element, or center of gravity, is that holds the enemy together as a single military entity.

In the cases presented here, the conventional militaries targeted forces and their leaders, because the leaders were considered as the source of strength that held the enemy together. But new leaders quickly filled any vacancies. Thus, in those cases, the COG concept was not applicable: killing the leaders did not completely defeat the enemy. And Clausewitz emphasized that militaries should look for centers of gravity only in wars designed to defeat the enemy completely.

The strategy used by the French in Algeria and by the Israelis during the Palestinian Intifadas may not have been called a center-of-gravity strategy, but it fits all the parameters. On the other hand, the concept of a COG appears in most military

⁷² Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1976, 595.

⁷³ Antullio J. Echevarria, “Clausewitz’s Center Of Gravity: Changing Our Warfighting Doctrine-Again!” U.S. Army War College, 2002, vi.

doctrines that dictate strategies for U.S. military forces. If the United States and others continue to implement this strategy in all conflicts, the future for conventional militaries against non-state enemies is discouraging.

B. FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR THE U.S. MILITARY

In the historical events discussed above, an outline that potential enemies could use to wage war against the United States has already been constructed. While it is unlikely that any country can defeat the United States in a conventional war in the foreseeable future, it is entirely possible that an unconventional war would present an insurmountable threat in the form of a protracted conflict. Operation Iraqi Freedom has exposed the United States' inability to efficiently deal with the challenges of a low-intensity conflict.

The United States must properly identify the nature of a conflict before committing overwhelming force. The Global War on Terror, or the Long War, as some now call it, is a good example of an inappropriate definition of the nature of a conflict. Yes, military forces are necessary for capturing or killing the terrorists. But the reasons for the terrorists actions and the ideology that supports them must also be determined, acknowledged, and dealt with politically if the United States and its partners are to be successful in eliminating the majority of terrorist threats in the world.

There has been some success in the so-called global war on terror. For example, leaders of al Qaeda have been captured or killed and other countries have joined the war and have eliminated some terrorist havens and sponsorship. Also, the U.S. has ramped up protection domestically by creating a Department of Homeland Defense. However, terrorist attacks are still being carried out on Western targets abroad, and the enemy is still committed to fighting the United States. The jihad is non-geographical in nature, and uses often the most disparate territories as short-term bases to train and carry out its operations.⁷⁴ The non-geographical aspects cause considerable problems for the United States, because it extends the fight beyond its traditional war-making ability. This is not

⁷⁴ Faisal Devji, *Landscape of the Jihad*, New York: Cornell University Press, 2005, 136.

an enemy that can be defeated by solely military means. It is a foe that must be dealt with by a wide variety of means: police work and forces, internal security apparatus, and various non-kinetic weapons like information operations.

Today we are faced with the challenge of a global insurgency, which requires a better understanding of the enemy and a high level of strategic thinking. The enemy understands and uses well the weapons of asymmetrical warfare, adapting its approach to deal with the superior conventional power of the U.S. military. To be victorious, we must confront this dilemma and take our thinking to a new strategic level, so as to better understand the tools and strategic approaches required to achieve victory in this very different twenty-first-century environment.⁷⁵ We must expand our thinking beyond the norms of traditional military action which were successful in winning state-on-state wars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

To limit terrorist activities around the globe, the United States must use a mixture of military, foreign policy, and informational tools. Military action should only be used to attack training grounds or on specific intelligence in cases where local security forces lack the sufficient motivation or capability. A more thoughtful foreign policy is critical for obtaining international cooperation, changing anti-American attitudes in many regions of the world, severing the many means of support for jihadists, and alleviating the root causes of radicalism and terror.

Success in the global war on terror will not depend on sophisticated military weapons. The recent Quadrennial Defense Review includes many things that it claims will help the U.S. military conduct irregular warfare—that is, warfare against combatants who are not members of a nation-state’s traditional military. However, the focus on strengthening U.S. military forces appears to confirm that the United States will continue to use the concept of military centers of gravity to develop its GWOT strategy. In light of that, I make the following recommendations:

⁷⁵ David W. Barno, “Challenges in Fighting a Global Insurgency.” Summer 2006, 15.

1. First, determine the nature of the conflict; then determine whether there is a center of gravity to attack and whether the COG is able to be targeted.
2. Assess whether the enemy's structure or network can act as a single unit.
3. Find the element that holds the enemy together. If that element is its ideology, as is often currently the case, then assess what resources would provide the best results in attacking the ideology.
4. Redefine the military concept of a center or centers of gravity as the focal points that hold an enemy's network or structure together.
5. Do not attempt to apply the conventional concept of a military center or centers of gravity to all wars or conflicts. Being more selective in applying the concept of COG will ease some of the competition between political and military strategies and objectives.
6. Prior to determining an enemy's COG, identify any gaps or connections that exist within the enemy's structure. There must be sufficient interconnectedness for the enemy to act with unity and thus for the concept to apply.
7. Reassess the designated centers of gravity and determine the need to attack them simultaneously and continuously.

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